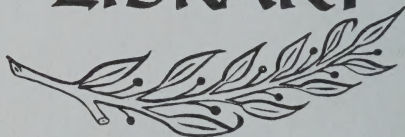


BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



One Rap — NO! Two Raps — DOUBTFUL! Three Raps — YES!

RAPPINGS

THAT
Startled the World

FACTS ABOUT THE
FOX SISTERS



Compiled by

R. G. Pressing

Published by

DALE NEWS Inc., LILY DALE, NEW YORK

PRICE ONE DOLLAR

Pamphlets and Booklets

WHAT DOES SPIRITUALISM ACTUALLY TEACH?

By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle50c

TRUMPET MEDIUMSHIP; How To Develop It

By Clifford Bias\$1.00

WHY RED INDIANS ARE SPIRIT GUIDES

By Frederic Harding25c

THE CATECHISM OF SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

By W. J. Colville50c

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH: Death Explained

By Andrew Jackson Davis50c

THE BLUE ISLAND: A Vivid Account of Life in the SPIRIT WORLD

By William T. Stead\$1.50

A GUIDE TO MEDIUMSHIP; Dictated by a materialized spirit through the mediumship of William W. Aber

.....50c

HOW I KNOW THE DEAD RETURN by England's greatest Spiritualist, W. T. Stead

.....\$1.00

SPIRITUALISM RECOGNIZED AS A SCIENCE; The Reality of The Spiritual World by Oliver Lodge

.....\$1.00

Special wholesale discounts to Spiritualist churches, societies,
Organizations and authorized booksellers.

Distributed by
DALE NEWS, Inc., LILY DALE, NEW YORK

BF128
F7R3
1900



KATE "CATHIE" FOX

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PART I. <i>Horace Greeley's</i> commentary on The Mediumship of the famous FOX SISTERS.....	12
PART II. <i>Historical Spiritualism</i> —The beginning and growth of Modern Spiritualism by <i>Adelbert Crouse</i>	20
PART III. <i>Authenticated Record</i> of facts concern- ing The Fox Sisters taken from The Encyclopae- dia of Psychic Science by Dr. <i>Nandor Fodor</i>	55



INTRODUCTION by R. G. Pressing.....	9
Ripley's "Believe It or Not"	11
Cadwallader's Semi-Centennial Wreath	22
Fox Cottage Memorial at Lily Dale	54
John D. Fox's Statement	62
Rosna's Tin Traveling Case	64
The Fox Sisters—Their ages and date of Birth.....	77
"Carrie Is Sleeping"—A Poem by Margaret	80

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
1. Kate "Cathie" Fox	3
2. Artist's conception of the Fox Sisters when the "mysterious raps" were first heard.....	7
3. The marking on the original site of THE FOX Cottage	7
4. Editor welcomes columnist	8
5. R. G. Pressing—Editor of <i>Psychic Observer</i>	9
6. Horace Greeley—Editor of <i>New York Tribune</i>	12
7. Fox Exhibition—New York City	17
8. Fox Exhibition—New York City	18
9. Hydesville Memorial Celebration — Rochester N. Y.	19
10. Cadwallader's Semi-Centennial Wreath	22
11. Emma Hardinge Britten	24
12. Rapping Technique Photographed	25
13. Where Charles Rosna Was Buried	28
14. Calvin Brown, Leah's Second Husband	31
15. Last Inhabitants of <i>The Fox Cottage</i>	41
16. <i>The Fox Cottage</i> —1850	43
17. Kate Fox Jencken	46
18. William Cullen Bryant	48
19. Judge John Worth Edmonds	51

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS (*Continued*)

	PAGE
20. Benjamin F. Bartlett	52
21. Fox Memorial at Lily Dale, N. Y.	54
22. Dr. Nandor Fodor—Noted Psychic Scientist....	55
23. John Fox—Father of <i>The Fox Sisters</i>	56
24. Kate "Cathie" Fox	58
25. Flo Cottrell and the Peddler's Kit	65
26. Robert Dale Owen	69
27. Daniel Underhill	71
28. William Crookes	72
29. Henry D. Jencken and Alexander Aksakof.....	73
30. "The Sisters Fox, The Original Spirit Rappers"	79
31. To my Sister Kate—from Maggie	81
32. The Underhill Residence, New York City.....	82
33. Mr. and Mrs. Underhill	82
34. Flo Cottrell—The Rapping Medium	82
35. A late picture of <i>The Fox Cottage</i>	83
36. Flo Cottrell demonstrating the raps	85
37. The Fox Family	87
38. Departure of The Astral Body at Death.....	88
39. Andrew Jackson Davis	89

WHAT THEY HEARD STARTLED THE WORLD



This is an artist's conception of the awakening of the Fox Sisters when they heard the "mysterious raps" for the first time.



ORIGINAL SITE OF THE FOX COTTAGE



The picture above was taken at Hydesville, N. Y., recently. The plaque (center) marks the location of The Fox Cottage, before it was moved to Lily Dale, N. Y.

THIS NEWSPAPER MAN WAS A WELCOME VISITOR



Psychic Observer

The picture (above) shows the FOX COTTAGE at Lily Dale as it looks today. At the doorway, R. G. Pressing is inviting Carl Wall, a newspaper man, to inspect the cottage. During the past 30 years, there has been a continued trek to Lily Dale by those who desire to hear these spirit rappings.

Representatives have been sent from TIME and LIFE MAGAZINES; Chicago, New York and Canadian newspapers. In September, 1932, even ROBERT RIPLEY wrote up the FOX COTTAGE in his syndicated column "BELIEVE IT OR NOT." In describing the cottage, Ripley called it "THE SPOOK HOUSE" but admitted the rappings were genuine, stating it was "a phenomenon that startled the world."

A nationally-known Movie-tone Weekly sent their representatives to Lily Dale in 1938 and in the process of their investigation, they were able to pick up the actual rapping sounds. Through the mediumship of FLO COTTRELL, raps were heard on the microphone. All the rapping sounds are made by Miss Cottrell's principal spirit collaborator, who prefers to be known as "UNCLE IKE."

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to present facts and authenticated data covering the entire history of the *Fox Cottage*. By selecting interesting documents and records compiled by men, *Not Spiritualists*, and by including many important pictures pertinent to *The Fox Sisters* and their famous career, a concise coverage of the entire episode can be explored.



R. G. Pressing

In *Part I*, Horace Greeley's commentary on the mediumship of the *Fox Sisters*, was published in *The New York Tribune* after the famous editor of that newspaper (Greeley) had attended a demonstration of the rapping phenomena. He was not and did not claim to be a *Spiritualist*—although it is believed that his wife had more than a passing interest in the subject.

In *Part II*, Adelbert Crouse specifically states he is *Not a Spiritualist* but that his only interest was to present the facts for future reference. He included all the data he was able to assemble in the interest of TRUTH and not because of a desire to publicize an unpopular truth . . . and such it (Spiritualism) was in those days even as it is now.

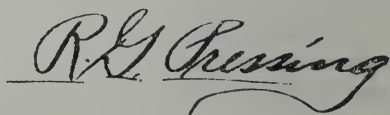
In *Part III*, we are indebted to Dr. Nandor Fodor, New York City, for permission to quote valuable information as is recorded in his brilliant work "*The Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science*." Dr. Fodor, formerly of London, England, is well-known in the field of psychic research and was the former director of *The British College of Psychic Science*, Walton House, Walton St., London, S. W. 3, England.

The pictures in this booklet have been assembled by *Psychic Observer* over a period of ten years. Grateful acknowledgment is made to *Marion Buckner* (Mrs. D. H.) *Pond* for her gracious co-operation and permission to use and publish many pictures included in this booklet. Mrs. *Pond* is founder of *The Fox Memorial Society*. (See Page 16).

And, too, my warmest thanks and recognition to *Rev. Edward Lester Thorne*, New York City's noted lecturer, clairvoyant and physical medium, for his courtesy and co-operation. (See Page 16). Many of the pictures in this booklet (Pages 17 and 18) were photographed from *The Fox Exhibition* displayed in *Rev. Thorne's* United Spiritualists' Church, 41 West 73rd St., N. Y. C.

The recognition given to *The Fox Cottage* by "*Believe It or Not*" *Robert Ripley* (Page 55) is not generally known.

In compiling a booklet such as this, it is quite possible to err in factual data presented. However, any corrections, accompanied by supporting evidence, should be submitted at once, so proper changes can be made in possible future editions.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "R. L. Pressing". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The reading matter in this booklet may be used, provided credit is given (i.e.) "Taken from 'Rappings That Startled The World'—published by Dale News, Inc., Lily Dale, N. Y."

The pictures cannot be used without special permission.

RIPLEY'S "BELIEVE IT OR NOT"

The *Fox Cottage* has received various degrees of publicity. Most reporters have been tolerant and fair.

Possibly one of the greatest stories to reach the public was handled by *Robert Ripley* in his "*Believe It or Not*" column. The interview with Ripley was arranged by *R. G. Pressing*, July, 1932, and released in his (*Ripley's*) syndicated column, September 22nd the same year.

At the time, many will remember *Ripley's* picture of the *Fox Cottage* which was the special feature for that day. It carried the caption: "*The Fox Cottage 'Spook House', Lily Dale, N. Y. . . . it was here—84 years ago—that Rapping first occurred—a phenomenon that startled the world.*"

In explaining his cartoon, Mr. Ripley, using parts of data supplied by Mr. Pressing, referred to The Fox Cottage as "*The Cradle of The Spirits*" and then continued: "*Modern Spiritualism* was born in the home of *J. D. Fox* of Hydesville, N. Y., where on March 31st, 1848, the phenomena known as table rappings and other noises attributed to spirit agencies manifested themselves for the first time. The two daughters of the owner, *Margaret* and *Katie*, who later became famous as *The Fox Sisters* were the first spiritual media. From Hydesville, the belief of modern spiritualists, that the dead are able to communicate with their survivors, spread over the world. *The Fox Cottage* was moved from Hydesville to Lily Dale, N. Y., in 1916."

PART I

Horace Greeley's

*Commentary on the mediumship
of the famous*

Fox Sisters



COMPILER'S NOTE

Taken from the book, "Modern Spiritualism and Its Facts and Fancies" by E. W. Capron, pages 179, 180, 181; published in Boston, 1855.

After spending a few months in hotels in New York City, the Fox Family visited several private homes. They were guests in the home of Horace Greeley, editor of The Tribune.

After several demonstrations of "rapping phenomena" under test conditions, Mr. Greeley published in his paper, an editorial "The Mysterious Rapping." This editorial reads:

"Mrs. Fox and her three daughters left our city yesterday. They returned to Rochester, after a stay here of some weeks; during which they have subjected the mysterious influence, by



Horace Greeley
1811 - 1872

which they seemed to be accompanied, to very reasonable test, and to the keen and critical scrutiny of hundreds who have chosen to visit them, or whom they have been invited to visit.

"The rooms which they occupied at the hotel, have been repeatedly searched and scrutinized; they have been taken without an hour's notice into houses they had never before entered; they have been all unconsciously placed on a glass surface, concealed under the carpet, in order to interrupt electrical vibrations; they have been disrobed by a committee of ladies, appointed without notice and insisting that neither of them should leave the room until the investigation had been made, etc.; yet, we believe no one, to this moment, pretends that he has detected either of them in producing or causing the rappings, nor do we think any of their contemnners has invented a plausible theory to account for the production of these sounds, nor the singular intelligence which (certainly at times) has seemed to be manifested through them.

Logical Deduction

"Some ten or twelve days since, they gave up their rooms at the hotel, and devoted the remainder of their sojourn here to visiting several families, to which they had been invited by persons interested in the subject, and subjecting the singular influence to a closer, calmer examination than could be given to it at a hotel, and before casual companies of strangers, drawn together by vague curiosity more than rational interest, or predetermined and invincible hostility.

"Our own dwelling was among those they thus visited; not only submitting to, but courting, the fullest and keen-

est inquiry with regard to the alleged manifestations from the spirit world, by which they were attended.

"We devoted what time we could spare from our duties, out of three days, to this subject; and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced beyond a doubt, of their perfect integrity and good faith in the premises.

"Whatever may be the origin or cause of the rappings, the ladies in whose presence they occur do not make them. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction.

"Their conduct and bearing is as unlike that of deceivers as possible; and we think no one acquainted with them could believe them at all capable of engaging in so daring, impious and shameful a juggle as this would be if they caused the sounds.

"And it is not possible that such a juggle should have been so long perpetrated in public. A juggler performs one feat quickly, and hurries on to another; he does not devote weeks after weeks to the same thing, over and over, deliberately, in full view of hundreds who sit beside or confronting him in broad daylight, not to enjoy, but to detect his trick.

"A deceiver naturally avoids conversation on the subject of his knavery, but these ladies converse freely and fully with regard to the origin of these '*rappings*' in their dwellings, years ago, the various sensations they caused, the neighborhood excitement created, the progress of the developments,—what they have seen, heard and experienced from first to last.

"If all were false, they could not fail to have involved themselves ere this in a labyrinth of blasting contradictions, as each separately gives accounts of the most astonishing developments at this or that time.

"Persons foolish enough so to commit themselves without reserve or caution, could not have deferred a thorough *self-exposure* for beginning of a new era, or economy, in which spirits clothed in the flesh are to be more closely and palpably connected with those who have put on immortality; that the manifestations have already appeared in many other families, and are destined to be diffused and rendered clearer, until all, who will, may communicate freely with their friends who have '*shuffed off this mortal coil.*'

"Of all this we know nothing, and shall guess nothing. But if we were simply to print (*which we shall not*) the questions we asked and answers we received, during a two hours, uninterrupted conference with the '*rappers*', we should at once be accused of having done so expressly to sustain the theory which regards these manifestations as the utterances of departed spirits."

Horace Greeley



*There is no death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb to the life elysian.*

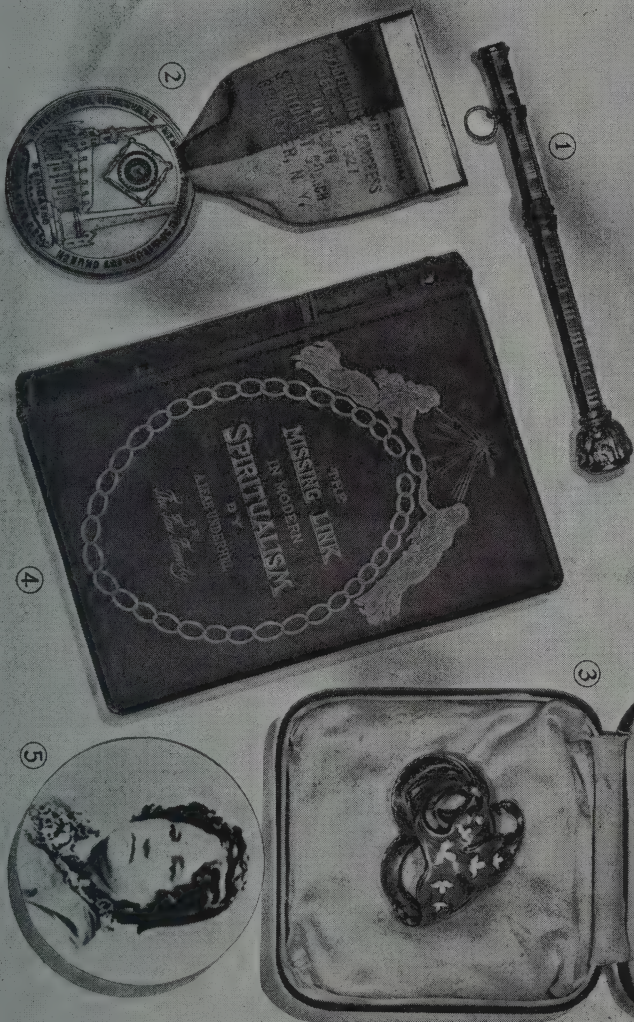
—Longfellow.

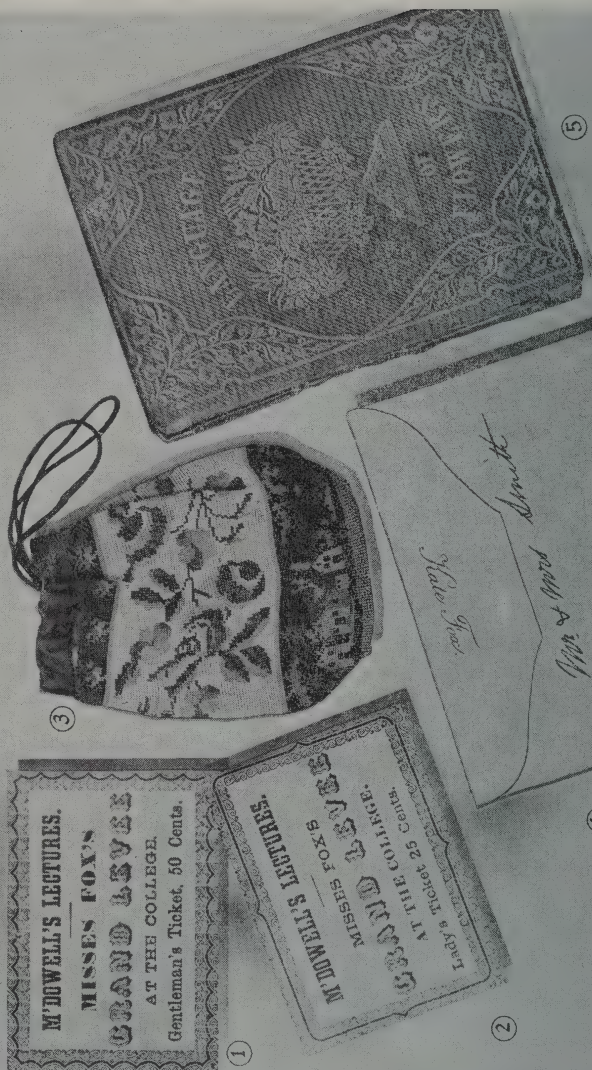
From Fox Exhibition in New York City

The articles and pictures on Pages 17 and 18 are part of a Fox collection owned by Mrs. D. H. Pond and Rev. Edward Lester Thorne. They are on display at the United Spiritualists' Church, 41 West 73rd St., New York City. Rev. Thorne (See Page 10) is pastor of this church. Mrs. Pond, (See Page 9) "*Thirty Acres*," Hudson, Ohio, is founder of *The Fox Memorial Society*, organized January 24th, 1946 for the purpose of erecting a suitable memorial to The Fox Sisters.

Identifying the articles, Page 17: (1) Silver pencil used by Kate Fox; (2) Medal worn by delegates during the dedication of The Fox Memorial at The Plymouth Spiritualist Church, Rochester, N. Y., December 4-7, 1927 (See picture Page 19); (3) Brooch worn in the portrait of Leah Fox (see picture 5); (4) Leather bound first edition (1855) of the book "*The Missing Link*" written by A. Leah Underhill; (5) Leah Brown Fox, 1852, wearing the brooch (see picture 3).

Identifying articles, page 18: (1) Self-explanatory; (2) Self-explanatory; (3) Beaded bag—belonged to Leah Fox Underhill; (4) Envelope with flap turned to the front—showing Kate Fox's engraved name. This envelope used as a visiting card, was addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Smith. It is in Kate's own handwriting; (5) Kate Fox's personal diary.







International Hydesville Memorial. Left to right, front row: Rev. Walter Foss; Mr. Barbour; Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader (with white scarf) former editor of "Progressive Thinker"; Mary T. Longley; Mrs. J. P. Whitwell; Rev. Joseph P. Whitwell; Thomas Grimshaw; Others in front not known to editor; Dr. C. A. Burgess, with hat—standing, second left at base of monument. This monument was unveiled Dec. 3rd, 1927.

PART II

Historical Spiritualism

Beginnings and Growth of

Modern Spiritualism

By ADELBERT CROUSE

Allow me to begin this paper with a disclaimer. This is *not* a paper on *Spiritualism*. That subject I have never even attempted to investigate. I have simply brought together, from many sources, some of the records of happenings beginning nearly eighty years ago in which *Rochester* has a historical interest. I express no opinion as to the accuracy of those records, but have taken them as I have found them and have tried to harmonize them and put them together in their chronological order to make an outline sketch of the beginnings of *Modern Spiritualism*.

Therefore, I have not always written "*it is said*" or "*it is claimed*" or "*it is alleged*," after the manner of the news of the day. I have tried to write this impartially without being influenced by my unbelief in *Spiritualism*.

The subject of *Spiritualism* is one for volumes, not for a brief paper, and this paper has to do with the beginnings of *Modern Spiritualism* at Hydesville in the town of *Arcadia*, *Wayne County*, *N. Y.*, and in *Rochester*, and its early development.

It has always been to me an interesting fact that the two great movements, *Mormonism and Modern Spiritualism*, had their origins in the same locality and at so nearly the same time. *Mormon Hill*, south from *Palmyra*, is but a few miles from *Hydesville*, which is seven miles east from *Palmyra*. About twenty years after the Smith family was demonstrating at *Mormon Hill*, the *Fox family* was demonstrating at *Hydesville*.

No Fees Charged

I have heard old residents of Wayne County describe visits made by them to the *Fox house* back in 1848 when the community was first excited by the sensational manifestations of the *Fox Sisters*. They told of the Saturday and Sunday crowds that came from far and near, filling the roads and lining the fences with horses and vehicles. My recollection is that they said a small admission fee was charged by Mrs. Fox, but I find no mention of this in any of the published reports of the matter.

The Fox family came from Bath, Canada, where the four children, *Ann Leah*, *David S.*, *Margaretta* and *Katie*, were born. For a time they lived in Charlotte in a house on the east side of the Boulevard, which was burned some years ago and was nearly on the site of the present Hedditch Market, No. 4392 Lake Avenue.

In the Rochester City Directory for 1844 I find "*John D. Fox, blacksmith, house, South Sophia (now Plymouth Avenue South) near Clarissa.*"

In the next City Directory, for 1845 and 1846, *John D. Fox* does not appear, as he and Mrs. Fox and the younger daughters, *Margaretta* and *Katie*, had them re-

(Continued Page 23)

Cadwallader's Semi-Centennial Wreath

At the Semi-Centennial of Modern Spiritualism, held at Rochester, N. Y., the Editor of "Progressive Thinker," Mrs. Mercy E. Cadwallader, presented a beautiful floral piece—a wreath of ferns, flowers and opening buds (See picture).



During this impressive celebration, over two hundred visiting pilgrims, as the early Spiritualists were called, enrolled their names upon a tablet prepared for this memorable occasion in memory of the

Fox Sisters and their marvelous mediumship.

Noted Spiritualists, attending the celebration, were: James M. Peebles, Moses Hull, Clara Johnson, Dr. S. A. Armstrong, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Hill, George W. Kates, Mrs. Z. B. Kates, Willit E. Post, Miss Josie W. Post, Mrs. J. W. Van Auken, J. E. Davis and Mrs. Cadwallader.

moved to Newark, Wayne County, but the son appears at the same address, viz: "*David S. Fox, blacksmith, house, South Sophia, near Clarissa.*"

In the next City Directory for 1847 and 1848, the son, *David S. Fox*, does not appear, as he had then removed to a farm near Hydesville, but the oldest daughter, *Anna Leah Fox*, who had married and become a widow, appears in this directory as "*Mrs. Ann L. Fish, house, 11 Mechanic's Square.*" *Mrs. Ann Leah Fox-Fish* was at that time a music teacher, contributing to the support of her younger sisters.

Fox Formerly "Voss"

After moving from Rochester, the Fox family lived in Newark, N. Y., for a time and moved thence to Hydesville, December 11, 1847.

The father of this famous family, *John D. Fox*, the hamlet blacksmith, does not seem to have figured much in the story. He was of German descent and the name originally was "Voss" and was supposed to have been anglicized into "*Fox.*" Apparently Mrs. Fox was the business half of the family.

Mr. R. D. Jones of Rochester, in his chapter on Spiritualism in Mr. William F. Peck's "*Semi-Centennial History of Rochester,*" 1884, states that Mrs. Fox's family were of French origin, that the name of her family was Routan, and that both on the paternal and maternal side there were traditions that several of their ancestors possessed what has been called second sight.

The one son, *David S. Fox*, who had been a blacksmith in Rochester, was then a farmer living near Hydesville.

The two girls then at home were Margaret, called "*Margaretta*" and Katherine, called "*Katie*", aged fourteen and sixteen.

The house in which they lived and the blacksmith shop were owned by Dr. *Henry Hyde*, afterwards by his son, *Artemas W. Hyde*, and the hamlet in which they were located was called "*Hydeville*," and later "*Hydesville*." It is about a mile west from Whiting's Corners on the road from the Newark Station of the New York Central Railroad. The name "*Hydesville*" continues, although but few of the houses now remain.



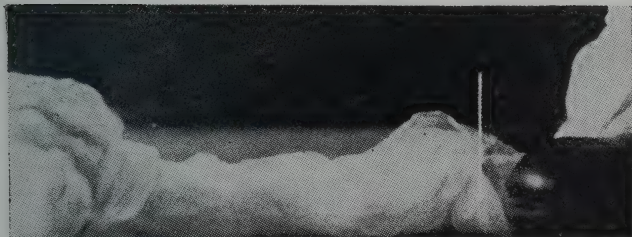
Emma Hardinge Britten
1823-1899

Some twenty years ago I inspected the Fox house at Hydesville, then vacant, and photographed its exterior and interior. It was a small, story and a half frame house, broadside to the

road, and my recollection of it is that one entered directly into the small front room, which had a bedroom to the right; that back of the front room was a kitchen with a pantry to the right, and that between the bedroom and the pantry were stairs to the attic and to the cellar.

The two girls were said to have slept in a trundle bed, kept under the other bed in the daytime and trundled out for their use at night. *Emma Hardinge Britten*, in her "*Modern Spiritualism*," New York, 1870, states that there were "*two fair-sized parlors opening into each other, a bed-*

RAPPING TECHNIQUE PHOTOGRAPHED



In the picture above, taken from W. J. Crawford's book, "Psychic Structures of the Goligher Circle," is shown a photograph of an ectoplasmic formation. Formations of this nature cause certain types of rapping phenomena. All spirit raps, however, are not produced by the same technique. In the picture, raps are recorded as having their origin from the point marked with the arrow.



room and buttery or pantry, opening into one of the rooms." This would be calling the kitchen and small living room "parlors."

A pamphlet by E. E. Lewis of Canandaigua, "Report of the Mysterious Noises" etc., published in 1848, soon after the events following states that there had been noises prior to its occupancy by the Fox family; that in 1843-44, a girl, *Lucretia Pulver*, employed by the tenant *John Bell*, had from time to time heard knockings in the bedroom and unaccountable footsteps about the house at night, following a certain time when she had been sent away from home for two days.

An account of the rappings, published by *Dr. J. B. Campbell* of Alleghany, N. Y., in 1851, details the unpleasant experiences of one Michael Weekman who was a tenant of the house for a year and a half (1846-47) before the Fox family came. He was frequently annoyed by loud rappings on the outer door but could never find

anyone at the door or about the premises and once in the night his little girl, a child of eight, felt a cold and clammy hand pass over her face.

But it was reserved for the family of *John D. Fox* to find out that these manifestations had an intelligence which was trying to talk with the occupants of the house. *Mr. and Mrs. Fox* were members of the *Methodist Episcopal Church* in good standing and with a good reputation for truth and veracity. *Honorable George W. Cowles* of Clyde, in his "*Landmarks of Wayne County*," published in Syracuse in 1895, speaks of the good reputation of *Mr. Fox*.

First Reported Conversation With Spirits

The early accounts vary, but are substantially as follows:

When they came to *Hydesville* in December, 1847, and from time to time thereafter, they heard knockings in the bedroom and in the cellar. At times their children felt a cold hand in the night, and sometimes the touch of a large dog. As these manifestations had continued from December to March the family became annoyed by them.

On the night of March 31, 1848, the youngest girl, who had become so accustomed to the noises that she was entertained rather than annoyed by them, began talking to the invisible, saying "*Here Mr. Split-foot, do as I do*", and snapped her fingers two or three times. Instantly the raps answered the same number of times. She then made a certain number of motions with her fingers but without noise. Instantly the invisible rapped the same number of times, and Katie said, "*Mother, it can see as well as hear.*"

Mrs. Fox then tried the new form of conversation and said, "*Count ten,*" and ten raps came in reply. She then asked for the age of each of her children in turn, and the correct number of raps came in reply to each question. Then correct answers came as to the number of her children living and dead. To the question, "*Are you a man?*", no answer came, but to the question, "*Are you a spirit?*" a response came.

As the spirit answered that it would talk with her neighbors, Mrs. Fox sent for a Mrs. Redfield who received prompt and correct answers to all her questions.

I have given this as the first reported conversation, of which I have read, between the living and the "*dead*" by spirit telegraphy.

Corroborated Evidence

In later conversations the spirit stated that it was the spirit of *Charles B. Rosna* who had been murdered for his money. Afterwards evidence was produced, indicating that a peddler had disappeared about the time that the girl *Lucretia Pulver* had first heard the mysterious noises in the house in 1843, and that he had last been seen at this house while she had been sent away for two days, and that upon her return she had found that the bottom of the cellar had been dug up.

On April 2, 1848, the rappings began to be heard in the daytime. Then the number of visitors increased and *Dr. Campbell* in his report, states that as many as five hundred came in a single day.

The pamphlet published by E. E. Lewis of Canandaigua, in 1848, contains the statements of William Deuser, a neighbor, as to his conversation with the spirit in regard to the murder of the peddler in the house in the winter of 1843-44. This conversation is affirmed by others who were present.

Prior to that date no unusual sounds had ever been heard in the house by any of its tenants. As soon after the communication in regard to the murder as the wet condition of the cellar would permit, an excavation was made and a cavity was found with a human skull and a few other bones, some hair and evidences of quicklime and charcoal.

WHERE ROSNA WAS BURIED



The picture above was taken at The Fox Cottage, Lily Dale, N. Y. It shows a reporter from a Chicago newspaper, Ann Marsters, inspecting the basement of the cottage. She is viewing the spot where the body of the peddler, Charles Rosna, was unearthed.

This pamphlet is entitled: "*A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of John D. Fox at Hydesville, Wayne County, Authenticated by the Certificates and Confirmed by the Statements of the Citizens of that Place and Vicinity.*"

After the quiet and orderly phenomena given above the spirit became more active, and the furniture was moved about, etheric hands seized the girls, doors were slammed, their beds shaken, their bed-clothes dragged off, and the house made to rock. Then they began to hear nightly the death struggle and murder of the peddler, the dragging of his body down the stairs and the digging of his grave. The rush of visitors increased, and altogether the house was no longer homelike.

Talking With Spirits Started at Hydesville

The Fox family then returned to Rochester, but as to the order of their coming, and as to what house was the scene of the first spirit rappings in Rochester, there are conflicting accounts.

One writer states that Mrs. Fish, on hearing of the manifestations at Hydesville, hurried down there to put a stop to it, that she brought the Fox family back with her and settled them in the house on Troup Street between Eagle and Washington; and that the mysterious noises were first heard in that house. That account was written in 1884, thirty-six years after the events, and is not supported by other writers.

Judge Cowles, in his "*Landmarks of Wayne County*," states that the two girls, Margaretta and Katie, removed to Rochester in May, 1848, but he does not say that they went at the same time.

Mr. William F. Peck, in his "*History of Rochester and Monroe County*", 1908, says:

"To prevent the possible collusion of the two children they were separated first one and then the other being sent to Rochester, to live with their elder sister, Mrs. Leah Fish. As long as either remained at home the noises continued there; when the last one departed they ceased entirely." (V.I., p. 76).

This was six years before the opening of the direct line of the New York Central Railroad from Rochester to Syracuse via Newark (1854), and passenger travel was then by the Erie Canal. One writer states that when Mrs. Fish was bringing Katie back, the packet boat was disturbed by knockings all the way from Newark to Rochester, a continuous performance.

First Public Demonstration

D. M. Dewey, in his pamphlet, published only two years after the events, states:

"Soon after the occurrence of the events heretofore related, a part of the family removed from Hydesville to Rochester, and resided with an older sister, Mrs. Fish, who had been a resident of that city some years."

And he further states:

"The elder of the two (Margaretta) first removed to Rochester. The sounds were made freely when she was with her sister, Mrs. Fish. Very soon after Margaretta came to Rochester the sounds attracted the attention of some friends of the family, and they communicated their experience to a few others, who commenced an investigation of the matter."

These manifestations by *Margaretta* at the house of Mrs. Fish were the first public manifestations in Rochester. As stated above, the *Rochester City Directory* for that year, 1847-1848, shows Mrs. Ann L. Fish, living at No. 11 Mechanics Square, i.e., the south side of a small square between King Street and Madison Park, South. The old No. 11 has been replaced by a modern building.

From there Mrs. Fish moved to a house on the west side of Prospect Street near Troup, where the manifestations were reported in October, 1848, by J. E. Robinson and John Kedzie in a letter to Mr. Dewey. These manifestations were at first strongly opposed by Mrs. Fish, and by her boarder, *Calvin Brown*, who later became her second husband.



CALVIN BROWN
Leah's Second
Husband

Later Mr. and Mrs. John D. Fox returned from Hydesville to Rochester, and after staying for a time in another house, they rented and occupied the house on the south side of Troup Street between Eagle and Washington, formerly the home of *Deacon Alvah Strong*, who had sold it and moved to No. 64 South St. Paul Street (now South Avenue).

Writers on *Modern Spiritualism* do not consider that it began at the Hydesville house or with the Fox family, but claim that it had been coming for a long time, that there had been earlier manifestations in different parts of the world, and as one of them wrote (Emma Hardinge, 1870):

"The open ear of intelligence will have no difficulty in recognizing the voice of many a John the Baptist who has proclaimed the coming of the New Spiritual Messiah. Among these none has rung out with a more clearly marked tone than 'Mesmerism' with its kindred phenomenon of Clairvoyance."

Psychic Battery Admitted

Cases are many of individuals who have acted abnormally and who have professed to have communion with the dead or who gained the reputation of having supernatural powers, but I have not read of any putting questions to the dead and receiving answers from them prior to the operations of the Fox Sisters at Hydesville in 1848. The same writer afterwards admits:

"Still the concrete and scientific characteristics of the spiritual movement in America take their origin in the first attempt at telepathy, commenced at Hydesville, and followed out in Rochester."

She states that the spirits *"claimed that this method of communion was organized by scientific minds in the spirit spheres"* and that the spirits *"referred to the house at Hydesville, as one peculiarly suited to their purpose from the fact of its being charged with the aura requisite to make it a battery for the working of the telegraph, also to the Fox family as being similarly endowed."*

At Hydesville conversations with the spirit had been slow and difficult from want of a system. A failure to rap in answer to a question was taken as meaning "no". Raps meant "yes". A number was indicated by the num-

ber of raps. But there was not used any system of spelling out words except to call the letters of the alphabet until the right one was indicated by a rap. Five successive raps asked for the alphabet.

To find out the day of the week on which anything occurred it was necessary to ask for each day of the week in turn until an affirmative rap came. In Rochester a better understanding with the spirits developed a more convenient and rapid system of spelling out answers to questions. It was agreed that one rap meant "no," that three raps meant "yes," and that two raps indicated that the question could not be answered.

Communications Vary

Answers also were written by the Fox girls with their hands under control of the spirit. At times a dial was used with the letters of the alphabet around it and with a hand which moved under control of the spirit to indicate in turn the letters spelling out the message.

At *Hydesville*, only the spirit of the murdered peddler was talked with. At Rochester it was found that many other spirits could be induced to converse.

At *Hydesville*, the presence of one of the Fox girls seemed necessary for manifestations, although one interview with the peddler is reported when only Mr. Fox was present. At Rochester, it was found that there were a number of persons who had success as mediums.

Then "*spirit circles*" became common, to which an admission fee was charged, and the wonder grew and spread.

Mrs. Jenny Marsh Parker, in her "*Rochester,, a Story Historical*," says that *Amy Post* was the first to urge upon Mrs. Fox that she ask a fee from those seeking communications, and that Mrs. Fox and her daughters were most unwilling to do so. She states that the first ones who met regularly at Mrs. Fox's house to investigate were Isaac and Amy Post, R. D. Jones, John E. Robinson and George Willets, and that these five may be considered as representing the nucleus of *Modern Spiritualism*.

They were all convinced that they were in direct communication with the departed. Mrs. Parker names among the early converts, Lyman Granger, Henry Bush, Benjamin and Angelina Fish, John Kedzie, Edwin Jones, Lewis Burtis, Nathaniel Draper, Rev. Charles Hammond, Schuyler Moses and Dr. J. Gates.

Special Selected Committee

After a year and more of spirit circles in private houses it was directed by the spirits and was decided to have a public demonstration in Corinthian Hall. On November 14, 1849, the meeting was held and about four hundred attended.

E. W. Capron of Auburn, gave a history of the Hydesville and Rochester rappings. Katie Fox was in Auburn, but a demonstration was given by Margaretta. The oldest sister, Mrs. Ann Leah Fish, was with her although she had been skeptical at first and had opposed the publicity of the matter.

The audience appointed a committee of five consisting of A. J. Combs, Daniel Marsh, Nathaniel Clark, Adoni-

ram *Judson* and *Edwin Jones*, to investigate the matter the next day and report at an adjourned meeting the next evening. The next day the committee conducted an investigation at the *Sons of Temperance Hall* and subjected *Margaretta* and *Leah* to numerous tests, and at the adjourned meeting in *Corinthian Hall* in the evening the committee reported that they could not find the cause of the rappings or any deceit on the part of the girls.

The audience demanded another committee to make further investigation and report the next evening. The second committee was *Dr. H. H. Longworth*, *Honorable Frederick Whittlesey*, *D. C. McCallum*, *William Fisher* and *Judge A. P. Hascall* of *Le Roy*.

Some Were Hostile

The following day the investigation was held at the office of Chancellor *Whittlesey*, and further and different tests were made. During the tests *Mr. Whittlesey* withdrew from the committee.

That evening *Corinthian Hall* was crowded, and this second committee reported the same as the first. The audience was in a rage and denounced the second committee and demanded a third and another adjournment.

Prominent citizens hostile to the movement asked to be put on the committee, and *Dr. E. P. Langworthy*, *Dr. Justin Gates*, *William Fitzbush*, *W. L. Burtis* and *L. Kenyon* were appointed. Their investigation was made the next day at the office of *Dr. Gates* in the *Rochester house*.

They were assisted by a committee of women, *Mrs. Stone*, *Mrs. J. Gates* and *Miss M. P. Lawrence*, who took the

girls to a private room, removed their clothing and had the spirits called while the girls were standing with bare feet, first on feather pillows and then on plates of glass. Under these conditions the rappings were as strong and inexplicable as before.

That evening *Corinthian Hall* was again packed and with many roughs at the front. When this third committee reported its failure the crowd rushed for the stage to mob the girls. *Police Justice S. W. D. Moore* (afterwards Mayor of the City of Rochester), himself a heavy-weight, had anticipated trouble and was on hand with a number of picked men. They fought the mob back, hand to hand, until the girls were removed to a place of safety. No up-to-date press agent could have done more for publicity.

Men of Highest Standing

During these meetings *Mrs. Ann Leah Fox-Fish* first discovered that she, too, had the same power as a medium as her two younger sisters. (See account of the investigation in *New York Weekly Tribune*, December 8, 1849.)

The most detailed account of these *Corinthian Hall* meetings which I have found is in a chapter written by *R. D. Jones*, of Rochester, for *William F. Peck's "Semi-Centennial History of Rochester,"* published in 1884.

In *Mr. Peck's* later "*History of Rochester and Monroe County*," published in 1908, *Mr. Peck* says: "*All the fifteen members of these different committees were men of the very highest standing in the community, of unblemished characters, and all of them, without exception, absolute disbelievers in the new system.*" Some of them, however, are in *Mrs. Parker's* list of early converts. Possibly

they were converted by the manifestations during these meetings and tests.

At that period electricity was often popularly charged or credited with whatever was not understood. The women's committee at the *Corinthian Hall* investigation had that in mind when they had the *Fox Sisters* stand on feathers and glass when being tested.

In 1842 a pamphlet called "*The Mystery Solved*," was published by the Rev. John C. Bywater at Rochester, which explained the whole matter and stated as a conclusion: "*As we have shown before, it is the general opinion, as well as the testimony of the spirits themselves, that these phenomena are produced by electrical power*," and he states that the spirit of one Samuel C. Wood, in reply to a question, answered: "*For agents or mediums we take nervous people, as, through them, we are better able to communicate, as they are better mediums, being possessed of more nerve-vital fluid, which is a better conductor of electricity, being more purely electrical in its nature, physicians' theories to the contrary notwithstanding.*"

Meetings at Corinthian Hall

In January, 1850, *Eliab W. Capron* and *Henry D. Barron* published at Auburn, N. Y., a pamphlet, "*Explanation and History of the Mysterious Communion with Spirits*," etc., which covered the period from the murder of the peddler at Hydesville to the Corinthian Hall meetings at Rochester, and gave a page and a half of names of residents of Rochester, Auburn and other places who had heard these manifestations of Spiritualism.

The Corinthian Hall meetings were, as I have stated, in November, 1849. The Fox family was then living in

what had formerly been *Deacon Alvah Strong's* house on Troup Street.

Soon after these Corinthian Hall meetings in November, 1849, a small pamphlet was prepared in March, 1850, by D. M. Dewey, of Arcade Hall, Rochester, with the title:

"History of the Strange Sounds, or Rappings, heard in Rochester and Western New York, and usually called the mysterious noises which are supposed by many to be communications from the spirit world, together with all the explanation that can as yet be given of the matter."

It was printed by Jewett, Thomas & Company, of Buffalo. Several editions of this pamphlet were published and in spite of its title it had a sale of thirty thousand copies in a few months. This pamphlet does not give very much of Mr. Dewey's own personal observations, but is principally his compilation of the statements of others.

Irrefutable Testimony

It includes an extract from Mrs. Fox's statement made soon after the occurrences at Hydesville, and a statement in regard to those occurrences made by *William Duesler*, of Hydesville or near there, April 12, 1848.

It also contains a statement relating to later phenomena signed by Mrs. *Ann L. Fish*, Mrs. *Margaret Fox*, C. R. *Brown* and *David S. Fox*. It contains a brief account of the Corinthian Hall investigation, signed by *E. W. Capron*, of Auburn and *George Willets*, of Rochester, November 22, 1849, which was published in the *New York Weekly Tribune* of December 8, 1849.

It contains letters from different persons who had investigated the mystery, including the *Rev. C. Hammond*,

J. E. Robinson, J. C. Baker and William H. McDonald, one of the editors of *Excelsior*, published in New York, in its issue of February 2, 1850, in which, among other things, he assures the public that Troup Street (where the Fox family then lived) is in a perfectly respectable neighborhood; also an article by the editor of the *New York Merchants Day Book*, who had visited Rochester and heard the rappings and whose account was published in his issues of February 22 and 27, 1850.

It also contains a joint statement published in the *Daily Magnet*, signed by Rev. Asbael Jervis, Edwin Jones, Rachel Draper, Mary Brown, Nathaniel Draper, Geo. Willets, Mary Jervis and Margaret Fox, February 23, 1850; also other "*communications from individuals who thought proper to withhold their names from the public but for whose intelligence and character Mr. Dewey vouched.*" These letters and statements described various physical phenomena of Spiritualism which the writers had observed.

Early Records of Phenomena

Mr. Dewey states "*that he is in no way responsible for the peculiar doctrinal conclusion any of the writers have adopted*"; also that the Fox family gave their consent to his publication, and that on his visiting their house he inquired of what purported to be the spirits if it would be proper for him to publish an account of the subject and that the answer was in the affirmative.

Those of you who heard or who have read Dr. Augustus H. Strong's "*Reminiscences of Early Rochester*," given before this Historical Society, December 27, 1915, will recall his account of the Fox family in 1850. After describing the old house where he was born in 1836, on

the "south side of Troup Street between Eagle Street and Washington, a frame house, one and a half stories in height diagonally opposite from the ground now occupied by the brick house of Mrs. Dr. Stoddard."

Dr. Strong adds: "When I reached the age of fourteen (1850), the house on Troup Street had been sold, and we had moved to more comfortable quarters on the east side of the river. The old house was offered for rent, and it became the residence of *Mrs. Fox*, famous in the history of the Rochester knockings. Her two daughters, *Katie* and *Margaretta Fox*, were the professed media of communications from the spirit world.

A Baptist Witness

"All Western New York was excited by the reports and the doctrines of Spiritualism. A gentleman from Mount Morris, with his wife, came to this city to investigate. He applied to my father for an introduction to *Mrs. Fox*. But my father was not only a newspaper man, he was also a Baptist deacon, and this calling up the spirits of the dead seemed to him forbidden in Scripture. So he hesitated.

"Hospitality, however, was one of his foibles; he reflected that it would be his guest that would do the calling up; he himself would be only a looker-on. He consented to take his two friends to the *Fox* abode, and, to give me a new bit of instruction and experience, he took me along.

"When we reached the house on Troup Street, we found it crowded with visitors. Every room upstairs and down, a *Presbyterian Elder*, and, with his wife, one of the leaders of *Mount Morris Society*. My father was a sort of public man, whom everybody in Western New

LAST INHABITANTS OF THE FOX COTTAGE



The "Fox House" at Newark, (*) N. Y., on the Hyde Farm. This picture was taken in 1898. The elderly couple in the doorway, were the last inhabitants. Eighteen years later, this cottage was moved to Lily Dale, N. Y.

(*) *Later the community on the outskirts of Newark was called "Hydesville" — named after the "Hyde" farm.*



York seemed to know and respect. Mrs. Fox came to the door, regretted greatly that she could not receive so distinguished a delegation at that particular time.

But would not the spirits grant us an interview? She would inquire. So she advanced from the front steps to the brick walk, with her daughter *Katie*, and she pronounced the question. Raps were immediately heard upon the bricks beneath our feet. Yes, the spirits would meet us. When and where? At the house of Deacon Strong, that very evening.

"Imagine the consternation of my father. To house this growing heresy and blasphemy. But my father was a polite man, and courageous. Hospitality again conquered, and the spirits invaded our house on South St. Paul Street.

"That was a memorable evening for me. It began very solemnly, with the wheeling out of a heavy mahogany center table into the middle of the parlor. Then the company gathered tremblingly around it, and formed a closed circle by clasping hands about its edge. Then we waited in silence. *Katie Fox* was opposite me. I thought I observed a slight smile upon her face. I was less observant of the proprieties at that time than I have been since and I ventured, alas, to wink at *Katie Fox*.

No One Could Deny

"And I thought that *Katie* did something like winking in return. She was a pretty girl, and why shouldn't she? But she soon composed her countenance. The seance proceeded solemnly to the end. But for me there was no more solemnity or mystery. All the rest of the performance seemed a farce.

"There was no manner of doubt about the rappings. These began under the table. They seemed to proceed from the floor. At last they came from the doors of the room, and even from the ceiling. Questions were proposed to the so-called spirits, and ambiguous or commonplace answers were spelled out.

"I do not remember a single communication that gave knowledge of any value, or beyond what the questioners already possessed. But the effect upon our two guests was great.



Psychic Observer

This picture of the FOX COTTAGE above was taken in 1850. The people in the doorway are visitors. Thousands journeyed here from all parts of the country to hear the "mysterious raps."



"That courtly gentleman got down on his knees and peered under the table, to discover the source of the sounds. It was all in vain. He was deeply impressed, concluded that these rappings were veritable messages from beyond the grave, went away a believer. Some weeks after my father learned that his guests left the Presbyterian Church, and had joined the Spiritualists. He never forgave himself for leading those two innocents into temptation.

"Not all of Mrs. Fox's visitors were so impressible. *Miss Mary B. Allen* was the preceptress of the best Rochester school for young ladies. Allen Street, I fancy, was named

for her father; at any rate it was the location for her seminary. Miss Allen was a maiden lady, sharp and wiry, with a grain of wit which could not tolerate nonsense. She concluded to investigate the knockings.

"Katie Fox had been a pupil at her school and this gave Miss Allen introduction into the home of the spirits. 'Was there any one of her departed relatives or friends with whom Miss Allen would like to converse?'

So asked Mrs. Fox. 'Yes, I had a grandmother whom I loved very much, and I would like to talk with her.' 'Is there any particular question that Miss Allen would like to ask?' 'Yes, I am interested in education and I would like to know something about methods in the other world. Spelling, for example. How does my grandmother now spell the word "scissors"?' And the spirit of the grandmother spelled out 'sissers'.

Dr. Strong's personal recollections are certainly interesting and valuable.

"'Oh,' said Miss Allen, 'that is just the way Katie spelled "Scissors" when she was a scholar in my school!'"

Interesting History

I have tried to locate and identify the famous house on Troup Street which was occupied by the Fox family—father, mother and younger daughters, *Margaretta* and *Katie*, after their return from Hydesville in 1848, and which was the scene of so many manifestations.

It is described by Dr. Strong as "a frame house one and a half stories in height," and located in a general way on "the south side of Troup Street, between Eagle Street and Washington," and as formerly the home of *Deacon Alvah Strong*.

For several years prior to the time when *Deacon Strong* moved to No. 64 South St. Paul Street (now South Avenue) the Rochester directories gave his house as No. 29 Troup Street. The directories do not give the name of the father, *John D. Fox*, after the return of his family from Hydesville, and, of course, did not give the names of Mrs. Fox or the unmarried daughters.

The directories for the four years, 1847-48 and 1849-50, give the name of *Oshea G. Fox*, Boat Captain, with house at No. 29 Troup Street, which had been the Deacon Strong house, and 1850 was the year when Dr. Strong described this house as occupied by Mrs. Fox and her two daughters, *Katie* and *Margaretta*.

The directories for 1849 and 1849-50 give the married daughter, "*Mrs. Ann L. Fish, music teacher, house, 31 Troup Street,*" which was the house next west of the *Deacon Alvah Strong* house, No. 29.

Where They Lived

In the directories for 1851 and 1851-52, she appears as "*Mrs. Anna L. Fish, mysterious knocker, house, 59 South Sophia Street.*" In 1853 and 1853-54 she is given at 32 Lancaster Street, so that during all these years her residence is kept separate from that of the rest of the Fox family.

G. M. Hopkins' City Atlas of Rochester of 1875 has the old numbering of the houses, and shows the location of the house No. 29. A comparison of this atlas with other atlases and maps in the City Engineer's Office shows that the Deacon Strong house No. 29 was on the same lot as the present house No. 109.

I am informed by the present owner of the newer houses, No. 107 and No. 109, that previous to the erection of the present houses at those numbers, and many years ago, there were standing two frame, story and a half houses, one on the front of each of these lots; that the smaller one, standing at 107 was then destroyed, and that the one standing at 109 was moved diagonally back and eastward onto the rear of the lot at 107, where it now stands and is numbered 107½. This would seem to show that the present rear house, 107½, is the old Deacon Strong house No. 29.

The objection to this conclusion is that the ground plan, arrangement of the rooms, partitions, doors and windows in this house, 107½, does not agree with the "*Diagram of Mrs. Fox's house*" on Troup Street, published in Mr. D. M. Dewey's pamphlet of 1850. The two are so unlike that it does not seem probable that the interior of the Fox house could have been changed to the present arrangement of this house, No. 107½. The question is still open.



KATE FOX JENCKEN

After their occupancy of the old Deacon Strong place on Troup Street, the Fox family lived for a time in a house which later became part of the historic house on the west side of Plymouth Avenue, now the home of Dr. and Mrs. Seelye W. Little.

In 1851 "*An Account of the Rappings,*" etc. by Dr.

J. B. Campbell of Alleghany, N. Y., was published. The next year a book by Isaac Post appeared. In the development of *Modern Spiritualism* a number of different kinds of mediums were discovered. There were the *rapping mediums*, whose presence was necessary to procure answers by raps when the spirits were questioned; *tipping mediums*, who by laying on of their hands caused the furniture to behave contrary to the law of gravitation; *speaking mediums*, who spoke unconsciously the words inspired by the spirits; *singing mediums*, who sang music they did not know, under direction of spirits; *impressionable mediums*, who would think and do what the spirits directed; and writing mediums, who wrote down under control communications from the spirit world.

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson

Isaac Post had become noted as a writing medium, and in 1852 he published in Rochester a volume entitled "*Voices from the Spirit World, Being Communications from Many Spirits, by the Hand of Isaac Post, Medium.*" This contained about forty communications from spirits of distinguished people, including *Washington, Jefferson, Calhoun, Franklin O'Connell, Swedenborg and Voltaire.*

A casual perusal of this volume does not convince us that these men have advanced mentally since leaving us. One writer states that at that time, 1852, there were already over two thousand writing mediums in the United States.

In 1849 and 1850, *Katie Fox* had conducted seances in Auburn, N. Y., where spirit circles were formed and believers became numerous.

The year of Dr. Strong's visit to the Fox family, 1850, Mrs. Fox and the three girls spent several weeks in New York and conducted seances which were attended by *J. Fenimore Cooper*, *N. P. Willis*, *William Cullen Bryant*, *Horace Greeley*, and many other distinguished people.



William Cullen
Bryant

Horace Greeley wrote very freely in defense of the honesty of the girls in their exhibitions. A letter from Mr. Greeley speaks of the return of Mrs. Fox and her three daughters to Rochester after a stay of some weeks in New York, where they were the guests of several distinguished families and where their manifestations had been subjected to searching investigations without detection of the origin or cause of the rappings.

In 1851, *William T. Coggsball* published in Cincinnati a pamphlet history of the spirit rappings in that city which began there in 1850, under the mediumship of *Mrs. B. G. Bushnell*, a clairvoyant who had witnessed the manifestations in Rochester.

In 1850, too, rappings were heard in the family of *Dr. Eliakim Phelps* in Stratford, Connecticut, and in Boston *Mrs. Margaret Cooper* became prominent as a medium, while in many other cities mediums were discovered and spirit circles formed without any connection with the Fox family or the Rochester movement.

After the organization in Rochester of a society of believers in materialization, the Fox family removed to New York (about 1851) where their public meetings and manifestations were continued and they conducted seances

at No. 231 East 13th Street. In New York the growth of the belief was rapid. A book entitled "*The Rappers*" was published in New York in 1854, written by an unbelieving and hostile investigator who described many seances which he attended, and states that there were already forty thousand sincere believers in spirit rappings in New York City.

In the autumn of 1852, Mrs. Fox and Margaretta visited Philadelphia and occupied rooms at *Webb's Union Hotel* in Arch Street for the purpose of giving receptions to those who wished to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism. Margaretta was then eighteen and was considered a beautiful girl.

Fagnini's Portrait of Margaretta

At one of their meetings she met Dr. *Elisha Kent Kane*, the explorer and scientist, who was a graduate of the *University of Virginia*, and a man of wealth and social prominence. He afterwards stated that at this first interview he decided to make *Margaret* his wife.

He tried to induce her to give up *spirit rappings* and to devote herself to acquiring an education with such habits as would efface the memory of the past and fit her for a different sphere. He persuaded Mr. Fox to place Margaretta in a select school at Crookville near Philadelphia, under the care of his aunt, Mrs. Leiper, where she remained for some time during his last Arctic expedition.

Before leaving (May 30, 1853), Dr. Kane had Margaretta's portrait painted by a distinguished artist, *Fagnini*, a portrait which he carried with him in his Arctic wanderings. Upon Dr. Kane's return in October, 1855,

he appeared to be not satisfied with the progress that she had made during his absence.

Just before leaving for a trip abroad (October 11, 1856) at his insistence they were married by a common-law marriage in the presence of four witnesses, her mother, *Catherine*, a servant, and a friend, which fact was to be kept secret until his return on account of the opposition of his family.

On this trip Dr. Kane died in Cuba, February 16, 1857. He had told *Margaretta* that he had given her a legacy in his will, but after his death the legacy was found to be in papers filed with and referred in his will. It was a trust fund from which she was to have the income for life. The trustee and executor, his brother, denied the marriage and refused to pay to her the income from the trust fund.

Dr. Kane's "Love Life"

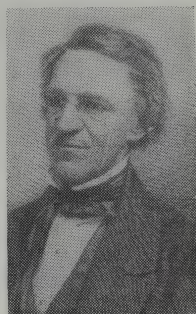
Upon her beginning proceedings to secure her right of dower in his real estate the matter was compromised and the parties made a written agreement to pay to her \$2,000 and the income from the trust fund, but after a few payments they defaulted, and *Margaretta* being too poor to incur the expense of proceedings against them received no further benefit from Dr. Kane's estate.

Afterwards to justify herself before the world she published in 1865, Dr. Kane's letters to her with her version of the case as given above, under the title "*The Love Life of Dr. Kane.*" In this volume there is a fine engraving made from Dr. Kane's portrait of her by *Fagnani*.

The spread of *Modern Spiritualism* through the United States and Europe was rapid. To spirit rappings there had been added the phenomena of table-tipping, automatic writing and trance-speaking. *Andrew Jackson Davis*, who had been a clairvoyant as early as 1845, now became famous as a trance-speaker.

Judge John W. Edmonds, a prominent lawyer of New York, a judge of the *Supreme Court* and afterwards of the *Court of Appeals*, became famous as a medium and writer on Spiritualism.

A *Mrs. Hayden*, of Boston, went to England in 1852 and conducted seances which resulted in spreading the movement through Europe.



Judge John
Worth Edmonds
1816 - 1874

In 1855, *Daniel Dunglas Home* did the same thing. Mr. Home's most mystifying work was in acts of levitation in which he would rise in the air and float out through a window and in again through another window. Seances were established in nearly every European town, drawing from the intellectual and social classes.

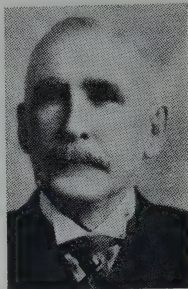
Henry Slade and *William Eglinton* followed with spirit-writing or "*psychography*." The *Rev. William Stainton Moses* became famous as an English medium and *Madame Eusapia Palladino*, of Naples, baffled all Europe with her seances.

Spiritualists are not non-Christians, but are Christians plus something else, and they include members from nearly all denominations. Their number has been estimated from one hundred thousand to eleven million. It is certain that

they are numerous in *Europe, Australia, and South America* as well as in the *United States*, and are represented by two hundred or more periodicals.

In 1855, Mr. E. W. Capron of Auburn, published in Boston his "*Modern Spiritualism*," which is considered a standard work on the subject. In 1870, Emma Hardinge published her "*Modern American Spiritualism*," which is the most comprehensive history of the whole movement which I have found.

The last that I have read of the Fox girls was some years ago. Mrs. Leah Fox-Underhill was then living in New York. Mrs. Margaretta Fox-Kane died in Brooklyn, March 8, 1893. Katie had been living in England and had married an English barrister named "Jencken." In 1888 she returned to New York, a widow.



B. F. Bartlett

In 1916, Benjamin F. Bartlett of Cambridge Springs, Penna., purchased the Fox house and moved it from Hydesville to Lily Dale, N. Y., where it was re-erected on the *Lily Dale Assembly Grounds* "as a matter of preservation and a memorial to Spiritualism and the Fox Sisters." The tablet or inscription over the entrance door of the house at Hydesville, as shown by my photograph was:

• SPIRITUALISM •
Originated March 31st 1848
• IN THIS HOUSE •

(See picture, Page 83)

I am informed that "*the tin traveling trunk of the peddler who was murdered in the Fox cottage was found, dug out of the ground in the cellar where it was buried quite deeply, and the log on which the rappings were heard in the cellar were brought with the cottage to Lily Dale and are on exhibition in the cottage.*"

Spiritualism in its broader sense, or "*psychism*," has been defined as the belief that the spiritual world manifests itself by producing in the physical world effects inexplicable by the known laws of nature.

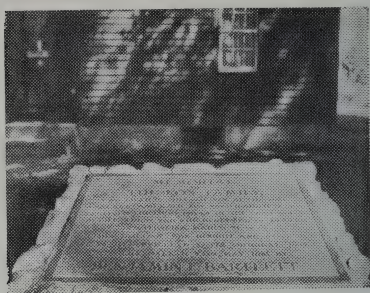
Judge Edmonds Investigates

It is enough for this paper to name some of the physical phenomena, to which volumes have been devoted, such as the moving of furniture, ringing of bells, playing of musical instruments, appearance of lights, producing flowers, voices and other sounds of unknown source, materialization of human hands, feet and bodies, spirit writing and drawing, spirit photography, untying of knots and opening of locks, lengthening and shortening of the medium's body, changing the medium's weight, the passing of solids through solids, the fire test, and the healing of the sick.

Much has been written both for and against their genuineness. Men of ability and high character have investigated and denounced and other men of equal ability and high character, such as *Judge Edmonds*, have investigated as skeptics and ended by writing volumes of belief—and there you are.

I will finish as I began, with a disclaimer. I have **never attended** a seance or witnessed any of the phenomena of *Spiritualism*.

THOUSANDS VISIT THE
FOX COTTAGE MEMORIAL AT LILY DALE



The inscription on the tablet reads: "Memorial to The Fox Family who lived in this cottage at the time Margaret and Katie Fox, aged 9 and 11 years, received the first proof of the continuity of life which was the beginning of Modern Spiritualism, March 31st, 1848. This cottage was bought and moved from Hydesville, N. Y., its original site, to Lily Dale, N. Y., in May 1916 by Benjamin F. Bartlett."

During the summer months, July and August, 1947 and 1948, thousands of persons will flock to Lily Dale, N. Y., to visit the Fox Cottage where rappings were first heard through the mediumship of The Fox Sisters.

Since the cottage was moved to Lily Dale the same rappings are being heard through the mediumship of Flo Cottrell.

For the past thirty years, so-called psychic researchers, magicians and an assorted array of skeptics made trips to Lily Dale to pick flaws in the astounding mediumship of Miss Cottrell. All have gone away puzzled. None have made any successful attempt to discredit her rapping phenomena.

Reporters from some of the largest newspapers in America have written favorable articles about their investigations.

PART III

Authenticated Record of Facts
Concerning

The Fox Sisters

Taken From the
Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science

By

Nandor Fodor



FOX SISTERS, KATE (1841-1892) and MARGARET (1838-1893), the pioneers of *Modern Spiritualism* joined shortly after the Hydesville episode by a third sister, *Leah*, variously known as Mrs. *Fish*, Mrs. *Brown* and Mrs. *Underhill*.

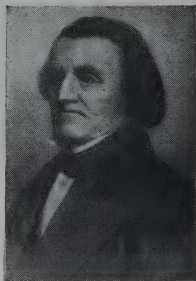
According to her book, "*The Missing Link*," New York, 1885, psychic power was inherited in the family. On the father's side (originally Voss, then Foss and finally Fox) their blood was a mixture of German, and on the mother's of French, Dutch and English.



FODOR

Their great grandmother was a somnambule. She would attend phantom funerals of persons yet living and describe every particular of the officiating minister and of the persons present. The description corresponded with the facts as they were afterwards observed. An aunt, Mrs. *Elisabeth Higgins*, as told in *Robert Dale Owen's "Foot-falls on the Boundary of Another World,"* saw in a dream her own tombstone and she died on the day there inscribed.

The events which made the family name historic date from December 11, 1847, the day on which *John D. Fox* took the tenancy of a house in *Hydesville*. The house had an uncanny reputation. *Michael Weakman*, the former tenant who moved in two years before, left it because of the mysterious noises but the family of *John D. Fox* did not experience serious discomfort until March, 1848. Raps, knocks and noises as of moving furniture were heard at night.



John Fox

They increased in intensity. On March 31 there was a very loud and continued outbreak of inexplicable sounds. Mrs. Fox suggested that the sashes might have rattled as the night was windy. The head of the family got up, tried the sashes, shaking them to see if they were loose.

Kate, the youngest girl happened to remark that as often as her father shook the window sash the noises seemed to reply. The idea came to her to ask for an answer to the snapping of her fingers. By this means their first communication with the unseen was established.

The testimonies of *Mrs. Fox* and *John D. Fox*, signed four days later, described the occurrences as follows: "On the night of the first disturbance we all got up, lighted a candle and searched the entire house, the noises continuing during the time and being heard near the same place. Although not very loud, it produced a jar of the bedsteads and chairs that could be felt when we were in bed. It was a tremulous motion, more than a sudden jar. We could feel the jar when standing on the floor. It continued on this night until we slept. I did not sleep until about twelve o'clock.

"On March 30 we were disturbed all night. The noises were heard in all parts of the house. My husband stationed himself outside the door while I stood inside, and the knocks came on the door between us. We heard footsteps in the pantry, and walking downstairs; we could not rest, and I then concluded that the house must be haunted by some unhappy, restless spirit. I had often heard of such things, but had never witnessed anything of the kind that I could not account for before.

"On Friday night, March 31, 1848, we concluded to go to bed early and not permit ourselves to be disturbed by the noises, but try and get a night's rest. My husband was here on all these occasions, heard the noises and helped in the search.

"It was very early when we went to bed on this night—hardly dark. I had been so broken of my rest I was almost sick. My husband had not gone to bed when we first heard the noise on this evening. I had just lain down. It commenced as usual. I knew it from all the other noises I had ever heard before. The children, who slept in the

other bed in the room, heard the rapping and tried to make similar sounds by snapping their fingers.

"My youngest child, *Cathie*, said: 'Mr. *Splitfoot*, do as I do,' clapping her hands. The sound instantly followed her with the same number of raps. When she stopped the sound ceased for a short time.



Kate "Cathie" Fox

Then *Margaretta* said, in sport, 'No, do just as I do. Count one, two, three, four,' striking one hand against the other at the same time; and the raps came as before. She was afraid to repeat them. Then *Cathie* said in her childish simplicity, 'Oh mother, I know what it is. Tomorrow is April-fool day and it is somebody trying to fool us.'

"I then thought I could put a test that no one in the place could answer. I asked the noise to rap my different children's ages, successively. Instantly each one of my children's ages was given correctly, pausing between them sufficiently long to individualize them until the seventh, at which a linger pause was made, and then three more emphatic raps were given, corresponding to the age of the little one that died, which was my youngest child.

"I then asked: 'Is this a human being that answers my questions so correctly?' There was no rap. I asked 'Is it a spirit? If it is make two raps.'

"Two sounds were given as soon as the request was made. I then said: 'If it was an injured spirit, make two

raps,' which were instantly made causing the house to tremble.

"I asked: '*Were you injured in this house?*' The answer was given as before. '*Is the person living that injured you?*' Answered by raps in the same manner.

"I ascertained by the same simple method that it was a man, aged 31 years, that he had been murdered in this house; that his family consisted of a wife and five children, two sons and three daughters, all living at the time of his death, but that the wife had since died.

"I asked: '*Will you continue to rap if I call my neighbors that they may hear it too?*' The raps were loud in the affirmative.

"My husband went and called in Mrs. Redfield, our nearest neighbor, a very candid woman. The girls were sitting up in bed (See Page 7) clinging to each other and trembling with terror. I think I was as calm as I am now. Mrs. Redfield came immediately (*this was about half past seven*), thinking she would have a laugh at the children. But when she saw them pale with fright and nearly speechless, she was amazed and believed there was something more serious than she had supposed. I asked a few questions for her and she was answered as before. He told her age exactly. She then called her husband, and the same questions were asked and answered.

"Then Mr. Redfield called in Mr. Duesler and wife, and several others. Mr. Duesler then called in Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, also Mr. and Mrs. Jewell. Mr. Duesler asked many questions and received answers. I then named all the neighbors I could think of and asked if any of them had injured him and received no answer.

"Mr. *Duesler* then asked questions and received answers. He asked: '*Were you murdered?*' Raps affirmative. '*Can your murderer be brought to justice?*' No sound. '*Can he be punished by law?*' No answer.

"He then said: '*If your murderer cannot be punished by law manifest it by raps,*' and the raps were made clearly and distinctly.

In the same way Mr. *Duesler* ascertained that he was murdered in the east bedroom about five years ago and that the murder was committed by a Mr. — on a Tuesday night at twelve o'clock; that he was murdered by having his throat cut with a butcher's knife; that the body was taken through the buttery, down the stairway and that it was buried ten feet below the surface of the ground. It was also ascertained that he was murdered for his money by raps affirmative.

"'*How much was it—one hundred?*' No rap. '*Was it two hundred?*' etc., and when he mentioned five hundred the raps replied in the affirmative.

"Many called in who were fishing in the creek, and all heard the same questions and answers. Many remained in the house all night. I and my children left the house. My husband remained in the house with Mr. *Redfield* all night. On the next Saturday the house was filled to overflowing. There were no sounds heard during the day, but they commenced again in the evening. It was said that there were over three hundred persons present at that time. On Sunday morning the noises were heard throughout the day by all who came to the house.

"On Saturday night, April 1, they commenced digging in the cellar; they dug until they came to water

and then gave it up. The noise was not heard on Sunday evening nor during the night. *Stephen B. Smith* and wife (my daughter Marie) and my son *David S. Fox* and wife, slept in the room this night.

"I have heard nothing since that time until yesterday. In the forenoon of yesterday there were several questions answered in way by rapping. I have heard the noise several times today.

"I am not a believer in haunted houses or supernatural appearances. I am very sorry there has been so much excitement about it. It has been a great deal of trouble to us. It was our misfortune to live here at this time; but I am willing and anxious that the truth should be known and that a true statement should be made.

"I cannot account for these noises; all that I know is that they have been heard repeatedly as I have stated. I have heard this rapping again this (Tuesday) morning, April 4. My children have also heard it.

"I certify that the foregoing statement has been read to me and that the same is true; and that I should be willing to take my oath that it is so if necessary."

(Signed) Margaret Fox.

April 11, 1848

A STARTLING STATEMENT!

John D. Fox Signed It

"I have also heard the above statement of my wife, Margaret Fox, read, and hereby certify that the same is true in all its particulars. I heard the same rappings which she has spoken of, in answer to the questions, as stated by her. There have been a great many questions besides those asked, and answered in the same way. Some have been asked a great many times and they have always received the same answer. There has never been any contradiction whatever.

"I do not know of any way to account for these noises, as being caused by any natural means. We have searched every nook and corner in and about the house at different times to ascertain if possible whether anything or anybody was secreted there that could make the noise and have not been able to find anything which would or could explain the mystery. It has caused a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

"Hundreds have visited the house; so that it is impossible for us to attend to our daily occupations; and I hope that, whether caused by natural or supernatural means, it will be ascertained soon. The digging in the cellar will be resumed as soon as the water settles, and then it can be ascertained whether there are any indications of a body ever having been buried there; and if there are I shall have no doubt but that it is of supernatural origin."

(signed) John D. Fox

April 11, 1848



A Body Is Found

The digging could not be resumed until summer. Then at a depth of five feet, they found a plank, deeper below charcoal and quicklime, and finally human hair and bones which were pronounced by medical men to belong to a human skeleton.

It has never been established who this peddler was. The name, *Charles B. Rosna* might have been misspelled. A maid, called *Lucretia Pulver*, who served in the haunted house four years previously when it was tenanted by a *Mr. and Mrs. Bell*, came forward and told the story of a peddler's visit. The peddler stayed in the house for the night and she was sent off to her parents. In the morning she was told that the peddler had left. The accused man did not keep silent.

From Lyon, N. Y., to which he removed in 1846, he produced a certificate of good character, signed by forty-four persons to the effect that they had "*never known anything against him*" and "*believed him to be a man of upright and honest life,*" and incapable of committing the crime of which he was suspected.

The missing skeleton was found 56 years later. According to a report of the "*Boston Journal*" of November 23, 1904, some parts of a rough wall built a yard from the true wall of the cellar fell down. Excavations were made by the owner of the "*Spook House*" and an almost entire human skeleton was found. There was a peddler's tin box near the bones.

This is now preserved at *Lily Dale*, recognized as one of the central headquarters of *American Spiritualists* to which also the old *Hydesville* house has been transported. It is likely that the murderer first buried the body in the middle of the cellar, then became alarmed, dug it up and buried it in the space between the two walls.

Mrs. Fox's hair turned white in consequence of the disturbances. The phenomena soon assumed the character

(Continued on Page 66)

ROSNA's TIN TRAVELING CASE VIEWED BY FLO COTTRELL



The picture on the next page was taken (1942) in the living room of the *Fox Cottage* at *Lily Dale*, New York State.

It shows *Flo Cottrell*, famous "*rapping medium*" seated before the heavy tin traveling box (14 in. x 26 in. x 16 in.) once owned by the peddler, *Charles Rosna*.

In this box, *Mr. Rosna* carried trinkets, inexpensive jewelry and household necessities, for which records show he was murdered.

This box, together with the remains of the body of *Charles Rosna*, was found buried in the cellar of *The Fox Cottage*.



of formal haunting. The sound of a death struggle, the gurgling of a throat, the heavy dragging of the body across the room was heard night after night. Finally they could not stand it any longer. But the raps continued in the house even after they left and one night more than three hundred people conversed with the invisible entity.

From Raps to the Message of Spiritualism

Kate took refuge at her brother's house in Auburn, Margaret at her sister's, *Leah*, in Rochester. The raps broke out in both places. In Rochester they were especially violent. *Calvin Brown*, who afterwards became the second husband of *Leah* and lived in the same house, was opposed to the manifestations and became the center of poltergeist persecution. Things were thrown at him, without however, causing him injury. Blocks of wood were found scattered in the rooms, sometimes with sentences written on. The manifestation was intelligent and spiteful.

"We had become satisfied" — writes *Leah* in "*The Missing Link*"—*that no earthly power could relieve us. While on our knees pins would be stuck into different parts of our persons. Mother's cap would be removed from her head, her comb jerked out of her hair and every conceivable thing done to annoy us.*" The spirits "*carried on the manifestations on the very peak of the roof. It sounded like the frequent discharge of heavy artillery. It was stated to us the next day that sounds were heard a mile away. We feared that the roof would fall in upon us.*"

These violent disturbances went on until *Isaac Post*, a visiting friend, suddenly remembered that *Leah's* brother,

"David, conversed with the Hydesville spirits by using the alphabet." Tremendous raps came in answer to the first question and the message was spelled out: "*Dear Friends, you must proclaim this truth to the world. This is the dawning of a new era; you must not try to conceal it any longer. When you do your duty God will protect you and good spirits will watch over you.*"

From that time on communications began to pour through and the manifestations became orderly. The table rocked, objects moved, guitars were played and psychic touches were experienced.

Fox Sisters Submit to Test Conditions

On November 14, 1849, the first meeting of a small band of Spiritualists took place in the *Corinthian Hall* in Rochester.

The excitement grew. Public investigation was demanded. The report of a committee of five which would not explain the phenomena as fraud was turned down and another committee was delegated. This was also forced to report that when the girls "*were standing on pillows with a handkerchief tied 'round the bottom of their dresses, tight to the ankles, we all heard rapping on the wall and floor distinctly.*"

Passion rose to fury heat, once the girls were nearly lynched, but in spite of the hostile atmosphere and denunciation in the Press, the movement kept on growing. Mediums sprang up. Mrs. Tamlin and Mrs. Benedict, of Auburn, the first two well-known mediums who were developed in the circle of Kate Fox, were followed by a host

of others and on November 28, 1849, owing to the increasing demand for sittings and the obvious handicaps to one following a normal occupation, professional mediumship was begun by *Leah*.

The first public sittings were soon followed by a propaganda tour to Albany in May, 1850, then to Troy, where their life was threatened, and on June 4, 1850, they brought the message of Spiritualism to New York.

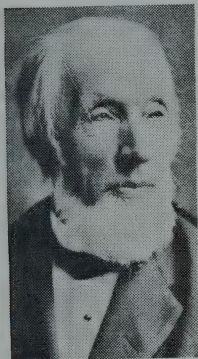
Greeley's Testimony

Horace Greeley, the editor of the *New York Tribune* was their first caller. Fearing for their safety he advised them to charge five dollars admission fee. Later under the aegis of the *Society for the Diffusion of Spiritual Knowledge*, free public sittings were initiated for which Mr. H. H. Day paid 1,200 dollars a year to *Kate*.

Interest ran high from the very first. In a single sitting the following celebrities gathered around the seance table: Rev. Dr. *Griswold*, Fenimore Cooper, George Bancroft, the historian, The Rev. Dr. *Hawks*, Dr. J. E. Francis, Dr. Marck, Willis and Bryant, the poets, General Lyman and Bigelow of the *Evening Post*.

Horace Greeley reported in the *Tribune*: "We devoted what time we could spare from our duties out of three days to this subject, and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced, beyond a doubt of their perfect integrity and good faith in the premises. Whatever may be the origin or cause of the "rappings," the ladies in whose presence they occur do not make them. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction."

The phenomena in these first seances were not powerful. Raps occurred, the table and chairs moved and the sitters were touched by invisible hands. Perhaps their most powerful early manifestations was recorded in 1853 by *Governor Talmadge*. It was the complete levitation of the table with himself on top. He also claimed to have received a communication in direct writing from the spirit of *John C. Calhoun*.



Robert Dale Owen
1801-1875

According to *Robert Dale Owen*, *Leah Fox* was the best medium for raps. With her he obtained them on the seashore in a rock, in a sailing boat, sounding from underneath, on tree trunks in the woods, and on the ground beneath their feet in open air.

Spirit lights and materializations were a comparatively late development. They were obtained both with *Kate* and *Leah Fox*.

Exposures, Tests and Confessions

Exposures, from time to time, were common. In February, 1851, the "*snapping of the knee joints*" theory was launched for the first time. *Dr. Austin Flint*, *Dr. Charles A. Lee* and *Dr. C. B. Coventry*, of the *University of Buffalo*, published in the "*Commercial Advertiser*" of February 18, 1851, the disclosure that the raps were produced within the sisters' anatomy.

A second investigation held up this theory and an alleged confession of *Margaret Fox*, published in April,

1851, by a relative, named *Mrs. Norman Culver*, threatened to bury both the *Fox Sisters* and the spiritualistic movement without hope. There was, however, a patent contradiction in the revelation.

According to it, when the committee held the ankles of the Fox sisters in Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles under the floor from the cellar. She was instructed to rap whenever she heard their voices calling on the spirits. The investigation to which the revelation referred was held in the houses of the members of the committee, or in a public hall, the girls did not keep a servant and Kate Fox was not present at these meetings at all.

Harvard Professors "Don't Know"

Nevertheless, the effect of the revelation was that the "*Rochester imposters*" were at the mercy of the Press, having but one defender: *Horace Greeley*. His interest was so deep that he furnished funds for Kate Fox to polish up her imperfect education.

Investigations into the reality of the phenomena were always numerous. Tests after test was applied. The skeptics faced two problems, to explain the production of the rappings, and the intelligence which answered the questions in many cases mentally asked. The second problem was seldom tackled, the first often and with very great ardor.

In 1857, as a result of the challenge to mediums in the "*Boston Courier*," several mediums appeared before a committee of Harvard professors in Boston. *Kate* and *Leah*

Fox were among them. The committee was difficult to satisfy. Their promised report was never published.

There is much in the personal history of the *Fox Sisters* in these early years that remains obscure. Years of public mediumship in a hostile atmosphere, the drain of too frequent sittings on their nervous energy, the danger of which was, at that time, yet unsuspected, the commercial exploitation of a gift which was beyond their control and the complete absence of understanding as regards the religious implications of spiritualism produced a deteriorating influence on their character.

Two strokes of good fortune stand out clearly. One was the marriage of *Margaret Fox* to *Dr. Elisha Kane*, the famous Arctic explorer, the other the third marriage of *Leah* to *Daniel Underhill*, a wealthy insurance man in November, 1858. With marriage both of them retired from public mediumship.



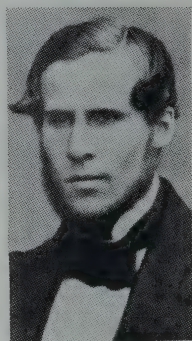
Daniel Underhill

Dr. Kane was a physician. He was skeptical, never arrived at any satisfactory solution of the phenomena and appears to have been convinced that *Margaret* was exploited in a mercenary spirit by her elder sister, *Leah*. When he was away in the Arctic he placed *Margaret* with his aunt for the purpose of polishing up her education and married her on his return.

Kane died in 1857. Some time after, under the title "*The Love Letters of Dr. Elisha Kane*," a book was published which became a fertile ground for suspicion against the *Fox Sisters*.

In 1861 *Kate Fox* was engaged exclusively for *Charles F. Livermore*, a rich banker of New York, whose wife, *Estelle*, died a year before. For a period of five years she gave him nearly four hundred sittings of which detailed records were kept. The doors and windows were carefully locked and the seances, witnessed by prominent men, were often held in Livermore's own house. While the medium retained consciousness *Estelle* gradually materialized. She was not recognized until the 43rd sitting when she was illuminated by a psychic light.

Later the materialization became more complete but the figure could not speak, except a few words. The communication took place through raps and writing. *Estelle* and another spirit, calling himself *Benjamin Franklin*, wrote on cards brought by *Livermore*. While she wrote the hands of *Kate Fox* were held. The script was a perfect reproduction of the characters she used when on earth.



William Crookes
Taken 1856

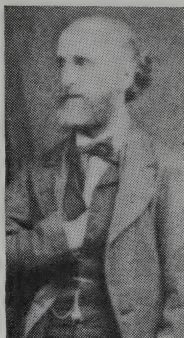
At the 388th seance, *Estelle* declared that she appeared for the last time. *Livermore* never saw her any more.

In gratitude for the consolation he derived from these sittings he enabled *Katie Fox* to visit England in 1871. In a letter to *Benjamin Coleman* he praised her irreproachable character and detailed her idiosyncrasies.

The career of *Kate Fox* in England was undisturbed. She sat for many important people, gave excellent op-

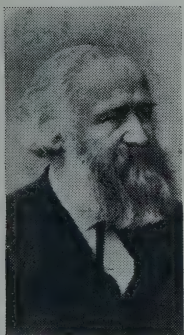
portunities to *Sir. William Crookes* for investigation and often held joint sittings with *Daniel D. Home* and *Mrs. Samuel Guppy*.

On December 14, 1872, she married *H. D. Jencken*, a barrister-at-law. Of the marriage two sons were born, both strongly psychic at an early age. *Jencken* died in 1881. In 1883, the widowed medium visited Russia, on *Alexander Akaskof's* invitation and was consulted about the auspices of the coronation of the Czar.



Henry D. Jencken

A few years later the three sisters found themselves in violent disagreement. Margaret Fox was the chief cause of the trouble. She came to England in 1876, then returned to America. Financial circumstances had long forced her back into professional mediumship. According to *Dr. Isaac Funk* she lived in poverty.



Alexander Aksakof
1832-1903

In 1884, she appeared before the *Seybert Commission* in Philadelphia. The raps which she produced when standing on four glass tumblers were not accepted as supernormal. Still, she acquitted herself well. Her relationship with *Leah*, the eldest sister, had become stormy.

Leah objected to the life she was leading and also strongly blamed *Kate*. The truth was that Margaret was addicted to alcoholism. When she returned to London she

fell under strong orthodox influence. *Leah*, it was said attempted to deprive *Kate* of the custody of her two children. *Margaret* allied herself with *Kate* and swore vengeance to ruin her sister.

In a letter to the "*New York Herald*," published on May 27, 1888, she denounced Spiritualism and promised a complete exposure. To keep her promise she returned to New York, gave interviews and a public lecture in the New York Academy of Music in August during which she produced raps on the stage, explained how the thing was done and declared Spiritualism to be a complete fraud.

To make matters worse, *Kate Fox* came to New York and eager to blacken *Leah*, made a similar confession on October 10, and endorsed her sister's revelations by participating in exposure meetings. The story of these exposures was quickly seized upon by anti-spiritualists and *Reuben Biggs Davenport's* book "*The Death Blow to Spiritualism*" appeared to be a fairly good estimate of the position.

Kate Retracts Her Confession

Not long after, however, another surprise was sprung upon the Press. Apparently, the pecuniary expectations of *Margaret* were not realized or the revenge proved to be less sweet than expected. At any rate, a year later in an interview given on November 20, 1889, she completely retracted her confession, spoke of her great financial difficulties at the time, of an excitement which almost upset her mental equilibrium and blamed the strong psychological influence of persons inimical to spiritualism for her action. She also wrote and signed a letter to the public to the same effect.

Neither of the *Fox Sisters* survived this scandal for long. *Leah* died first in 1890, *Kate* on July 2, 1892, *Margaret* on March 8, 1893. *Kate*, known as *Mrs. Sparr* by her last marriage, and *Margaret*, are buried in the *Brooklyn Cypress Hill Cemetery*. Their confession and retraction made them fit for psychiatric study but did not affect the position of Spiritualism.

Isaac Funk was probably right in writing of *Margaret* that at that stage "for five dollars she would have denied her mother, and would have sworn to anything."

Richet's Deductions

Professor Charles Richet said: "In 1847, *Margaret* was 15 and *Kate* 12. (This is contradicted by a letter of *Mrs. Fox* to the President of the anniversary meeting held in New York in 1868 in which she stated the ages of her children were incorrectly rendered in the first printed report, *Kate* was seven and *Margaret* ten years old at the time). Can we suppose that these two children organized a fraud that was tested thousands of times? The reality of rappings does not depend on the *Fox Sisters*. In 1888 it was too late for denial and their recantation proves nothing.

In conclusion it is of interest to mention that at a meeting of the *Medico Legal Society* of New York in 1905 the subject of Spiritualism was discussed. *Mrs. Mellen*, a woman doctor who is not a spiritualist, stood up and told the story of the last hours of *Mrs. Margaret Fox Kane*.

In a tenement house in *Ninth Street* she passed some hours every day at her bedside. *Mrs. Fox Kane* was unable to move hand or foot. There was not a closet in the

place nor any other hiding place of any kind. And yet the knockings were heard now through the wall, now through the ceiling, and again through the floor.

"They were heard," continued Mrs. Mellen, "in response to questions the woman put to her guide, as she expressed it, and she was as incapable of cracking her toe-joints at this time as I was."



THE FOX SISTERS .

Their Age and Date of Birth

Encyclopedias and writers differ somewhat in respect to the age of the justly celebrated *Fox* sisters. While administering to their physical needs, during the last few years of their earthly existence, I did succeed in getting it correctly, although they were very cautious not to divulge their age.

A statement was made at *Hydesville*, April 11, 1848, by the mother, *Mrs. Margaret Fox*, and the neighbors who first witnessed the phenomena of *Modern Spiritualism*.

This statement was so correct that the eldest sister, *Mrs. Ann Leah Fox Underhill*, embraced it all in her book entitled the "*Missing Link*," except that information relating to or which would give any clue to their ages.

I am well aware of the fact that their age is of minor importance as compared with the phenomena produced through their instrumentality, and the deductions therefrom.

However, as *Modern Spiritualism*, in its efforts to enlighten the people of earth, is comparatively young and destined to attain a great age, it would be well to have the record correct. The correct data according to my records:

Margaretta Fox Kane, born Oct. 7, 1833.

Catherine Fox Jencken, born March 27, 1837.

Mrs. A. Leah Fox Underhill, 34 years.

The statement did not give any clue to *Mrs. Underhill's* age, but *Mrs. Kane* informed me that her sister was 20 years older than herself and this statement was subsequently corroborated by *Mrs. Underhill*.

Date of Their Departure To the Higher Life

PARENTS—*John D. Fox*, Jan. 10, 1865; *Margaret Fox* Aug. 3, 1865.
Ann Leah Underhill, November 1, 1890.

Daniel Underhill, September 1891.

Katie Fox Jencken, July 2, 1892.

Margaretta Fox Kane, March 8, 1893.

TITUS MERRITT,
Editor of Light and Truth.

YONKERS, N. Y., May 7th, 1896.

The Misses Fox

Our readers, believers and non-believers in Spiritualism, are thanking us for presenting the portraits of the "original rappers," the *Misses Fox*, of Rochester, who have made so much notice in the world. The likenesses are from a daguerreotype (Meade Brothers, of New York) and are therefore reliable.

Since the origin of the rapping excitement in Rochester in 1849, mysterious demonstrations of the nature of those of which the *Misses Fox* were the media have been signalized all over the world; they have given rise to books, pamphlets and newspapers without number, and the believers in their spiritual origin are numbered now by the hundreds of thousands.

The phenomena exhibited by the media, are so curious that learned men have felt it their duty to investigate them, and various are the theories by which they are sought to be accounted for.

One of the most elaborate works on the subject is that by *Professor Mahan*. *Professor Faraday* of England has also given the subject his attention, and honored it with his theory. Congress has been memorialized to appoint a committee of investigation; but as yet our legislature have not seen fit to devote their time to Spiritualism.

Of the ladies, whose portraits we present it may be sufficient to remark, that no imposture has been found upon them; and that committees composed of the cutest yankees, both male and female, have failed to discover any secret machinery or fixtures, by which sounds heard from and about them might have been produced.



Picture on opposite page (79) appeared with above write-up in Ballou's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, June 14, 1856.

THE SISTERS FOX, THE ORIGINAL SPIRIT RAPPERS.



CARRIE IS SLEEPING

—★—
TO THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF CARRIE A. HALE
—★—

*Cross the hall — in the parlor sweetly at rest,
With waxen hands folded o'er the soft breast;
And buds with white roses to lighten the gloom,
Lies Carrie, the angel, now in her bright home.*

*Long lashes are resting on each marble cheek,
The lips gently parted as if she might speak!
So joyous, and pure, in her lovely young bloom,
Too lovely, we thought, to bear to the tomb.*

*But Seraphs from Heaven conveyed her away,
Where no night shall ever succeed the bright day,
To that realm of pure love, with a Savior to live,
And bliss such as mortals can never receive.*

*In visions ye'll welcome your dear one again,
And oft ye will listen to catch angel strain;
'Twill be your lost darling! in dreams she will come
To whisper, I'm happy and safe from all harm.*

*In that glorious home you once more shall meet,
Enfold in your arms, 'twill be, oh! how sweet,
Dear Carrie is smiling in Heaven above,
Where angels are thronging around her in love.*

MARGARET.

—★—
Poem written by "Maggie" in 1853.



TO MY SISTER KATE

I present thee a rose Kate,
 A rose I present unto thee,
 I know it is sweet and 'tis pretty
 Then wilt thou accept it of me.
 'Tis fresh from the stem where it was blooming
 And filled all with nectar and dew,
 Its fragrance how sweet and presuming,
 Its blushes remind me of you.

From your sister

Maggie

Cleveland, June 16, 1857.

Where Leah Lived After her
Marriage to Mr. Underhill



Mr. and Mrs. Underhill



The picture above (left) shows the parlor in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Underhill (Leah), 232 West 37th St., New York City.



FLO COTTRELL

Holland, N. Y.

America's Outstanding Rapping Medium

During the summer months, since 1916, Miss Cottrell has lived in the Fox Cottage, where each day, during July and August, from 10-12 A. M. and 4-6 P. M., she has demonstrated and will continue to demonstrate her rare phases of physical phenomena.



Miss Cottrell

A LATE PICTURE OF THE FCX COTTAGE



The Fox Cottage at Lily Dale as it appears today. The sign, bearing the inscription (see page 52), can be seen over the front door.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY SPIRIT RAPS

The picture on opposite page shows an interior room of the Fox Cottage at Lily Dale. Through the mediumship of Fio Cottrell (standing) the three women visitors are receiving answers to their questions by means of rapping phenomena. In the picture, to the left, there is a door (not shown in the picture). This door opens into the bedroom where the peddler, Charles Rosna, was murdered. The door ajar, to the left, marks the entrance to the stairway leading to two upper bedrooms—adjoining a hallway. Through the screen door in the left background, Forest Temple Park is visible.



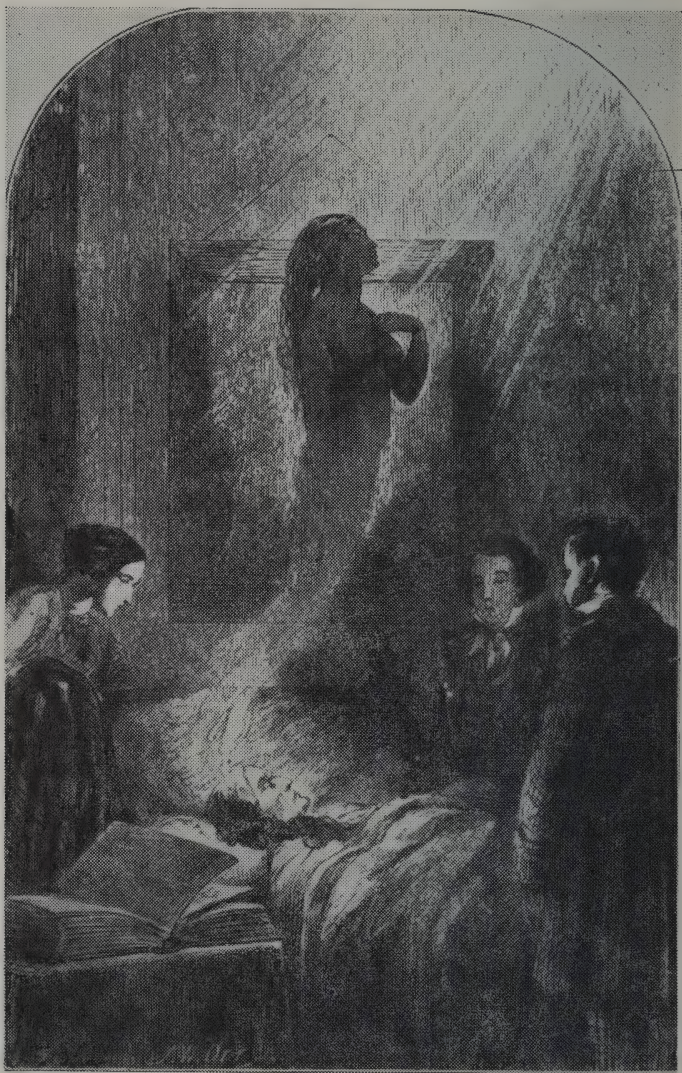
THE FOX FAMILY

In the photograph on the opposite page: upper row,
left to right—Katie, Leah, Margaret. Lower row,
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Fox.



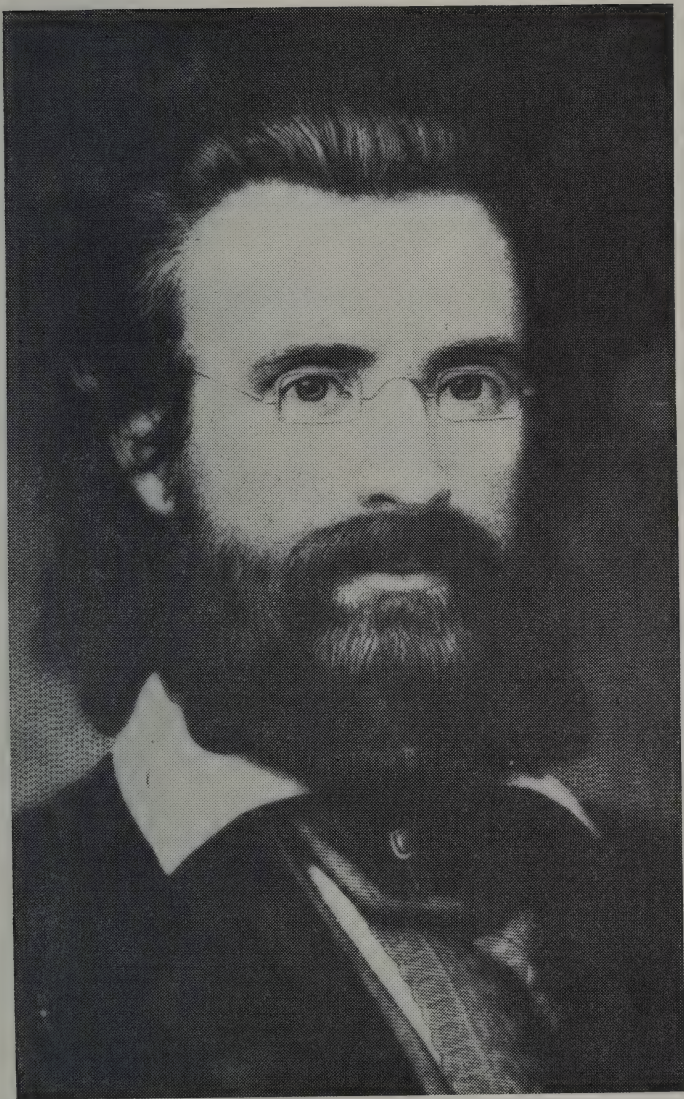
THE FOX FAMILY

MODERN SPIRITUALISM TEACHES THAT THE
SOUL LIVES ON AFTER DEATH



The Departure of the Astral Body at Death according to clairvoyant vision of Andrew Jackson Davis.

"THE POUGHKEEPSIE SEER"



Andrew Jackson Davis

He prophesied the beginning and growth of Modern Spiritualism

Stead Memorial Center (N.Y.C.) Publications

Three Outstanding books, written and compiled from data received in seance rooms through the mediumship of the late Mrs. N. S. Themelis (formerly Mrs. Cecil M. Cook). The principal spirit collaborator relaying this data was WILLIAM T. STEAD.

THE KEY TO COMMUNICATION

Price \$1.25

A guide to successful spirit communication, embracing instruction for the beginner, hints for the advanced student and authentic, practical information for the sincere worker. Should prove useful to every person interested in the science of spirit communication.

Every one can learn something from this book, layman, practitioner, student or investigator.

GOD'S WORLD

A Treatise On Spiritualism

Price \$2.00

Through God's own law the spirits of those who have passed through the portals of death communicate with those on earth. There are millions of persons right here in America who have the courage to believe that the life, the personality, the love which they knew in their dear ones has not come to an end.

THE VOICE TRIUMPHANT

The Revelations of A Medium

Price \$3.00

This book was written by Mrs. Cecil M. Cook, who, during her life-time was considered one of America's outstanding mediums. It is based upon thirty years of observation and experience, embracing more than 30,000 seances and private sittings.

For Sale By

Dale News, Inc. - - - - Lily Dale, N. Y.

Aluminum Trumpets

Student Size Trumpet; Hand-Made, Three section	\$5.95
Professional Size Aluminum Trumpet; Four-section. Hand Made	\$7.95
Baby Aluminum Trumpet, three sections; measuring 11½ when extended; hand-made; perfect workmanship	\$2.95
Student Luminous Band	75c
Professional Luminous Band	\$1.25

A one ounce bottle of Luminous Paint; lasting quality.....\$1.25

OUIJA BOARD

Size 15 inch by 22 inch\$3.75

THE NEW PLANCHETTE

Develop mediumship at home. Complete with permanent pencil \$3.50

SLATE WRITING

Double Slates\$1.25

(Dimensions 7 in. x 9 in.)
Slate pencil with each order.

ORIGINAL ESP CARDS

Testing Extra Sensory Perception. Each deck includes RECORD
PAD for conducting experiments in Telepathy and Clair-
voyance\$1.25

Note: Above prices include postage.

NO C. O. D. SHIPMENTS

Not responsible for cash sent in the mail

For Sale by

DALE NEWS, Inc. - - - - - Lily Dale, N. Y.

Read



*America's Leading and Largest
Selling Spiritualist Periodical*

Over 5,000,000 Copies Distributed Since 1938

\$2.50 a Year — \$1.50 6 Months

Edited by

Juliette Ewing Pressing

and

Ralph G. Pressing

SPECIMEN COPY SENT UPON REQUEST

Published by Dale News, Inc. . . Lily Dale, New York

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 06628 678 0

